

MYTH AND IDEOLOGY CONSTRUCTION IN INDONESIA TELEVISION

ADVERTISING: A SEMIOTIC BASED APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This paper uses Roland Barthes semiology to reveal the myth and ideology constructed in television commercial advertisement. The study tries to explain how the product consumed and used, work ideologically, by observing the dynamic relationship between the signifier and the signified in the broadcast commercial product text. The study focuses its area of concern in the motorcycle product advertisement aired on television and completed with direct interview with members of motor community of Makassar Indonesia. The result indicates that commercial television advertising media in Indonesia does not emphasize the meaning of denotation (the benefits of the product), but it emphasizes the symbolic sign which represents a simulacrum reality. The true meaning of the current human life is much determined by the relationship established between the man and the commercial products. Product serves from time to time as a symbol of social identity. Commercial advertisement works as a simulacrum that consists in making product impression and images constructed in human mind become natural and reasonable though around an ambivalent reality.

KEYWORDS: Myth, Ideology, Advertising, Semiotic, Message, Signifier, Signified

INTRODUCTION

Many of us do not want realize the fact that we are actually buying a product under the influence of advertisement. But we can't deny how ad information and services offering products through various media such as newspaper, magazines, television to mention several examples, and render them our daily necessities in our lives. And also, without realizing it, we completely rely on certain product for the sake of our routine consumption.

This fact proves that we are not able to avoid the advertisement attacks. Beside television, newspapers, and internet, advertisement are also visible in short message service, billboards, banners, posters and even in the back cover of text books. It promotes products through various media and enter our head and get stored in our memories. In simple terms, We can look at our habit in searching for information about a product on the basis of our needs and problems, i.e., healing sickness, buying cars, houses or promoting products; all are introduced by the opening page of advertisement in newspapers or internet that are traceable by search engine (Google site). Advertising media has become the source of knowledge about a certain product to us.

Advertisement has dominated public spaces, both in the media and in the areas such as shopping malls and cafes. In selling products to us, the ad take the advantage of media –and as religion-, it spread promise, hope and solution that can evoke emotion and mind to believe it. Advertisement creates a system of signs, which are meaningful (Williamson, 1978, p. 12).

The development of Indonesia television advertising today and the rapid advance of competition are inevitable and indispensable and make every manufacturer tries any possibilities through various strategies of persuasion by means of which they convince the potential consumer to throw away the doubt about the properties of product being promoted. More than just an act of selling a product, media ad. sells something else, namely a system of ideas by means of a myth or discourse as a way of constructing a new reality of the product promoted. According to Baudrillard, the ad creates certain meaning of reality and consequently when we consume a product, in the same time, we consume its meaning through advertising (1968, p. 252). So consumption actually means nothing but the notion that the system created the advertiser.

As noted Kathy Myers, not just a form of brand advertising and informing the benefits of the product, but a product should mean something (2012, p. 85). The emphasis in advertising is how the product is seen as sign which is anything that can be used to represent or substitute something else in significantly. Barthes, in *Mythologies* (1957), uses the term myth, as a way to conceptualize or understand something in reasonable and natural way by advertising text, presented in the form of a narrative (story). In text ads trying to naturalize a mythical concept is dominant meaning of a given meaning.

Studies of the ad discusses various aspects. This study will focus on how the Indonesia television advertising media works in constructing the myth and ideology which refers to product in television ad-text the relationship between myth and ideology. In research to be conducted, the author will emphasize the distortion of meaning, - a sign of the value exchanged with something else that is socially meaningful to humans - for the construction of myth and ideology over reality products in the texts of television commercials. Through this research will be found how the model form or the meaning of myth and ideology above the mark (the product) is promoted in television commercials.

This study uses Barthes semiotic, who developed Saussure's semiotic theory, with a focus on the theory of myth to address issues in research.

Saussure said that semiotics is the study that examines the signs in social life: how the sign works, produced and used in the community (1967: 33). Saussure proposed the concept of dichotomy marks, called *signifiant* (signifier) and *signifié* (signified), which is an integral and inseparable. One example given is the sound /arbròr/ consisting of six letters 'arbror' word 'arbor' is a marker of a concept relating to an object which in fact is a tree which have stems, and leaves. The marker (image sound or word) itself is not a sign, unless someone knows as such and is associated with the concept that was tagged. Saussure uses the term *signifiant* to terms of shape marks, and *signifié* to terms of meaning.

The signified is the mental representation of the sign and not something that is referred to by the sign. So signified object but not the mental representations of objects. Saussure called the mental nature signified by the term concept. Signifier and signified can be distinguished, but in practice can't be separated, the two are fused and interdependent, and a combination of both then generate the sign.

Signifier is sound meaningful or significant streaks (material aspect), what is said and written or read. Setting the meaning of a sign requires a social convention among the language communities. In this case the meaning of a sign appear due to an agreement between the community of language users.

While signified is mental image or concept of the mind (the mental aspect of the study, Saussure, 1967 : 98). Both of these elements are like two sides of a coin or a piece of paper. The relationship between signifier and signified is formed by convention rather than by nature, this marker is essentially opens a range of opportunities marker.

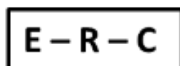
RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the explanation in the previous subsection, the formulation of the problem may be filed as limiting the scope of the study, namely:

- How does the process of tagging (of significance) that created the myth by television advertising texts?
- What is the meaning of myth represented in a television ad text?
- The ideology of what is found in a television ad text?
- How is the relationship between myth and ideology in television ad text?

BARTHES SEMIOTIC BASED APPROACH

Barthes (1952-1980) developed a semiology of Saussure's thinking. In theory, Barthes uses the term expression (E) for the signifier and contain (C) for signified and relation (R) which connects between the E and, thus forming meaning. R serves as a shaper and distinguishing meaning (Barthes, 1977: 89-90).



Barthes split over two levels or systems of meaning, the first level (denotation) is the generally accepted meaning of the basic conventions of a society. The second level (connotation and myth) is the creation of a particular meaning (meaning extra) called the object of the secondary system.

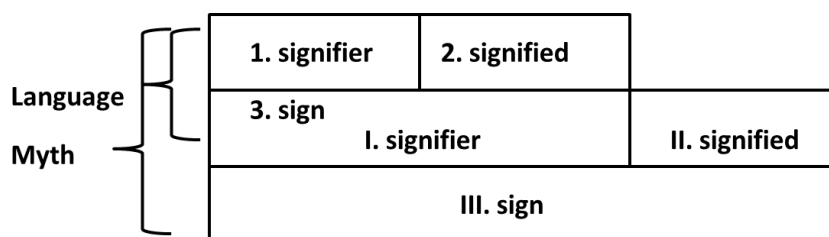
Myth is a marking system on the second level which creates a new object (meaning new) different from the first system. Barthes says that the signified (concept) in the first system are elements that make up a myth, *est le concept du mythe constituant element* (Barthes, 1957: 193).

The concept of myth Barthes published in his book 'Mythologies' (1957), which is a series of books that contains articles mostly published in the magazine *Les Heures Nouvelles* between 1954 and 1956.

Barthes book basically talks about criticism of language ideology in mass culture. The core of the discussion in Barthes's book is more emphasis on the relation between form (markers) and concept (signified).

Barthes interpret the myth as a narrative, *Le Mythe est une parole* (1957: 181). Because the myth is called a narrative, a myth is a system of communication, a way to convey the message. Further explained that the myth is not a concept or idea but it is a way to make sense of something or said a message.

As the myth semiotic system formed through the process of signification markers, markers and signs. The significance of the process occurs at two levels. The first level is called the linguistic system (language). The second level is called a myth. As a second level system semiology, semiology the myth took a first-rate system as the foundation in creating new meanings. Myth as a combined total of between concepts and forms the first level, a signifier on the second level, Barthes, 1957: 187). So. Myth is a dual system consisting of the system and the system of linguistic and semiology (mythic).



Source: Mythologies (Barthes, 1957: 187)

Figure 1

In applying the system of myth, Barthes gives the example (Mythologies, 1957: 189) photo of a black soldier among the white soldiers, who were members respect the existing French flag on the front cover of the magazine Paris-Match (No. 236, June 25-2 July 1955). At the first level, the marker is "a photograph of a young soldier dressed in French uniform, which was a salute to the flag of France". Markers or concepts that emerged from the marker is "black soldier saluting the French flag". Marker on the first level of a marker on the second level as a mythical system, ie "black soldiers members respect the French flag" and signified is French and military concepts, 'the great French empire without any discrimination to salute the flag of France'.

METHODE

This type of research is descriptive. This type of research aims to make a systematic description, factual, and accurate information about the facts and nature of the population studied or object and to portray the results of research in narrative form with pictures video (commercials television), and based on the theories that support the research. Descriptive research is a hallmark of verbal language (text) and nonverbal (picture video) television advertising. Thus, in this study, the data collected are the subject of research is the slogan, tagline and ad text narrative television.

There are two types of data used in this study, namely primary data and secondary data.

Primary data is text that is in the form of television commercials verbal text (slogan, tagline, and text narrative television ads), ad impressions obtained from a commercial on television stations nationwide (private). Primary data is the object of study is advertising Honda motorcycle products (Vario and Beat brand), advertisements Yamaha (Mio and Jupiter MX brand) and Suzuki motorcycle ad (Satria and Nex brand).

Secondary data is the result of interviews with the motorcycle community in Makassar: community and Satria Suzuki Nex.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Myth Construction

In the context of television commercials studied, the sign on the first level, (denotation) is the brand/product type, features and advantages of the product possessed. Denotation meaning refers to the usefulness or benefits of the product and the myth of the level is a sign you are referring to or interpret something other than itself the first (meaning level). Myth creates a new object (social meaning) motivated by certain dominant ideology of the sign maker. In the context of television commercials, a myth which is located on the second level is the branding/product type. In semiotic, the myth of television advertising creates social meaning, namely product differentiation and identity marks. For example, the motor in the ad is much more than just a two-wheeled vehicle. Motor is a sign that has been infiltrated meaning in human life.

Motor transport is not only meaningful, but also the act of communication, how the motor as a sign, to communicate with us. In a television commercial, a particular motorcycle brand gained significance that goes beyond the usability and functionality of the motor. Construction of meaning generating myths advertising sign what is called the simulacrum (ambivalence). With reference to the system of meaning Barthes, the product as a sign has two functions, namely the function of the material (meaning denotation) and social functioning (culture). The function of a material is the basic meaning of a sign. The function of social (cultural) on the second level concerned with meaning and value, namely how to construct the meaning of self, identity, differentiation, and social symbols.

Suzuki Nex Advertising

Tagline of Suzuki Nex Ad is *You are Nex, the other ens*. Suzuki Nex ad tells the story of the friendship of a group of young people. The story begins one young woman, one of the members of the group, its members uneasy because it has not come at the right to follow dance exercise (dancing). One male friend had the idea to contact friends via SMS. Friends were contacted to forward short message service it to another friend. They agreed to leave by using Suzuki Nex and meet on the street, and came along to the event dancing exercises. During the trip using the Suzuki Nex, shown how the motor is driven by a group of young children, agile, nimble and fuel efficient petrol while the indicator is displayed unchanged. Arriving at the venue they immediately dance training.

Differentiation Symbolic

Advertising obviously produce meaning. Denotative convey to us the identity of the product (brand and advantages) that people recognized him. Meaning myth emphasizes certain values (socio-cultural values), how products are created human meaning, which can be exchanged with our products.

In the context of the ad, the first task is how manufacturers create differentiation between a particular product with another product that is contained in the same category. In the second level of meaning (myth), the ad does this by way of supplement products with images, by giving the meaning of social/cultural. Identity whatever possessed of a product is more dependent on something other than himself (socio-cultural function), rather than himself (function of material). Ads still insists on self-identity and a differentiator signs with other signs. So many brands of motorcycles, but any brand will not equate himself with the other. So, one of the functions of myth is to create a sense of differentiation as a form of images by giving meaning something else (social significance) than himself (meaning denotation).

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Suzuki Nex differentiation symbol can be seen on the tagline, "you are Nex, and others end". This sentence is a meaningful metaphor, by comparing two objects. The first is the pronoun 'You', which uses the product of Suzuki Nex. The second is the word 'other' which means another motorcycle brand. Tagline is trying to explain that if a person uses a motor Suzuki Nex, then he will go faster than the other products. This ad uses mythological language 'speed' as differentiation

Suzuki Nex with other brands.

The function of myth in the context of this ad is the significance of man through the products used- interpellate individuals into concrete subjects through material objects (products) are used.

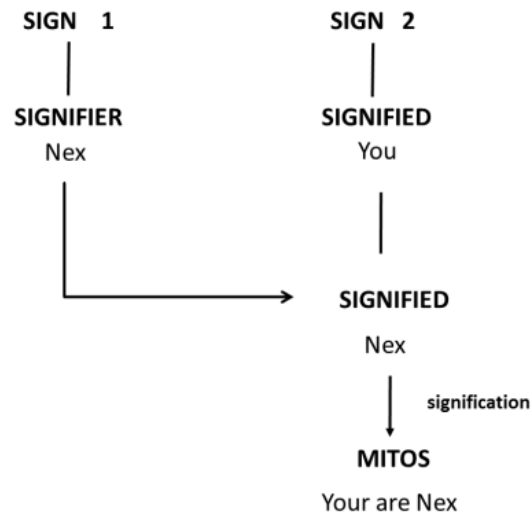


Figure 2: Relation Signifier and Signified in Shaping the Myths

In sign of the exchange concept, the pronoun 'You' has a meaning equivalent to NEX. Motor Products 'nex' as a process of signification or symbolization of the 'You'.

Solidarity Symbolic

Ads Suzuki Nex replace something that is meaningful to us: 'solidarity'. Suzuki Nex product is interchangeable with the social values of solidarity, something that takes human values in social life. Suzuki Nex given mythical meaning 'solidarity' as tastes in common social values symbolized by using Suzuki Nex by a group of young people. Meaning of 'solidarity' in the ad Suzuki Nex represented by a group of young people went to friend's house using a Suzuki Nex to attend dance rehearsal.

In Elements of Semiology Barthes (1994), said that the function of the marker, as the material is a sign of a mediator or liaison over the marker, as a material representation of concepts (objects). So, as a marker Suzuki Nex is a mediator of the concept of solidarity as a concept product material (Suzuki Nex). Suzuki Nex meaning of the sign no longer refers to the function of the sign material, as a means of transportation, but refers to the social function, solidarity. The process of creation of new meanings (objects) on the Suzuki Nex taken denotation of signs in society, 'solidarity'.

The word 'solidarity' added a new signified of signifier Suzuki Nex. Thus, signified of Suzuki Nex material functions as a means of transportation, emptied, then filled with a new signified, 'solidarity'. In essence, the meaning of the sign is outside himself. An object can mean for the community, if the object is given meaning by taking the meaning of the sign that has become conventional in society. Advertisers as an apparatus that produces signs, giving and offering social meaning (the meaning of the sign that has been known in the community) on Suzuki Motor products. When the meaning of 'solidarity' as a symbolic sign of Suzuki Nex, meaning the sign becomes an ideology, meaning that is universally acceptable in society.

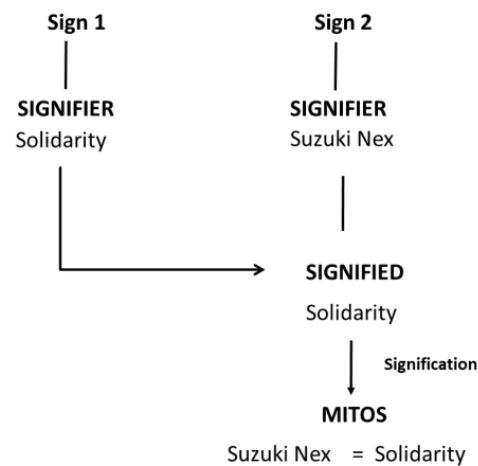


Figure 3: Relation Signifier and Signified in Shaping the Myths of Solidarity

Suzuki Satria F 150 Advertising

Tagline of Suzuki Satria advertising is *Satria make you difference*. Satria motorcycle ad 150 is one of the Suzuki brand motorcycle products with a capacity of 150 cc, which is shown as a motorcycle different from other motorcycle brands. These ads highlight on the advantages of the product compared to other brands, so the ad serving tagline 'brave different'. In the ad Satria F150 motor products have characteristics similar to humans, which has style, idol, challenges, obsession and purpose.

Verbal text of Suzuki Satria Ad.: *All people want to be different, different styles, different idol, different challenges, different expression, different obsession, different objectives, Satria make you difference.*

Differentiation Symbolic

Myth differentiation of Suzuki Satria F150 ads can be represented on the tagline, "Satria make you different". Advertising utilizing the characters of human beings, the desire and hope to be different with others. Hope and the human desire to be different to the others in terms of style (style), idol (admired figure), challenges (how to face the challenges in life), expression (desire put forward ideas), obsession (the expectations are achieved) and goals (ideal man would be reached). The function of advertising is creating hope and a desire to take advantage of the basic character of human beings in social life, the hope and the desire to be different with others. Meaning of expectations and desires as a human character is transferred to the Suzuki Satria products. Myth differentiation emphasizes that the use Satria motorcycle products, then people will have the hope and desire. Ads try to emphasize the differences in human beings with each other symbolized by the use of motorcycle products Suzuki Satria.

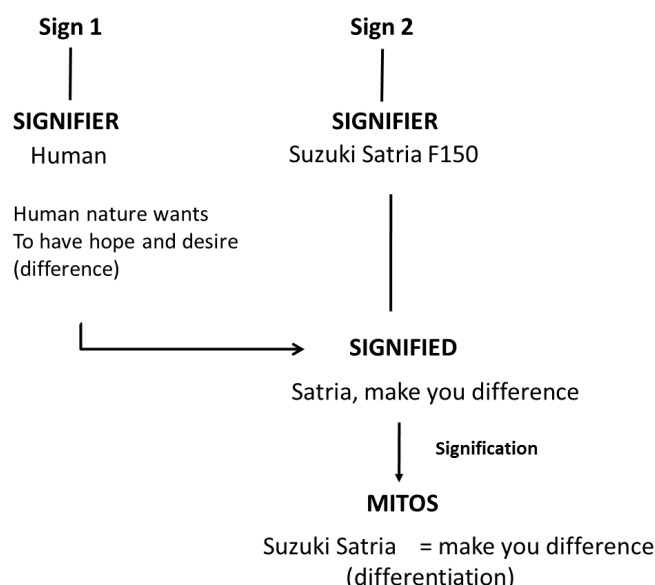


Figure 4: Relation signifier and Signified in Shaping the Myths of Differentiation

The basic function analysis of myth in advertising (television) is a sign of how created or conceptualized become natural or natural. To get to the analysis, then taken the concepts of culture that exist in society then given meaning to the product being advertised. What is communicated by the advertisement to us is not unusual or new, but the concept is the denotation of culture existing in the society. Thus, advertisements, such as the meaning of product differentiation on the motor Satria F150 is part of human beings, part of the culture. Because the ads are part of us, then we (humans) are consumers of products and at the same time.

Sign (Product) Create Something Meaningful For Humans

Myth shaping function in ads has been the subject of significant individuals through the use of products. Thus, humans are made to identify and actualize themselves through what they consume (use). Advertising through myth constructed to try to create an unconsciousness. From where advertising creates a false assumption that by using a Suzuki Satria which has characters such as humans, they, especially young people, will be different, manly, brave. Meaningfulness of human beings exist on the product used. The task of advertising is to transfer positive human characters, who have the hope and the desire to live life to the product. To achieve the hopes and desires, have done just that product. Products, such as Suzuki Satria has become the object system, something that marks forming structures in man. Meaning in actual social life, is not with the existence of people who are surrounded by others but surrounded by objects (products used). Humans fill their lives with the object.

Ideology Construction

In the construction of the myth, the sign of a second - level semiotic system. Sign, i.e., a total combination of signified (concept) and signifier (image, shape) in the first system becomes a signifier of the second system. In the first system, the system linguistic or language - object into the back of a myth that will form its own system. Myths are formed by linking it with social aspects of culture in society, from outside the system itself and the referent system. Thus, the myth (the creation of new objects) is motivated by a particular view (ideology) from advertisers.

In a sign of significance, the ideology of the referent system becomes a signified in the myth. In other words, ideology is a signified of the second system, a concept, a view, and the signifiers a form of myth (the image). Thus, the view, the concept of motivation on which the formation of a meaningful sign is called ideology. Ideology infiltrating into tagging signs and be signified (concept). When the concept was established, accepted as a natural thing or natural, then it becomes an ideology.

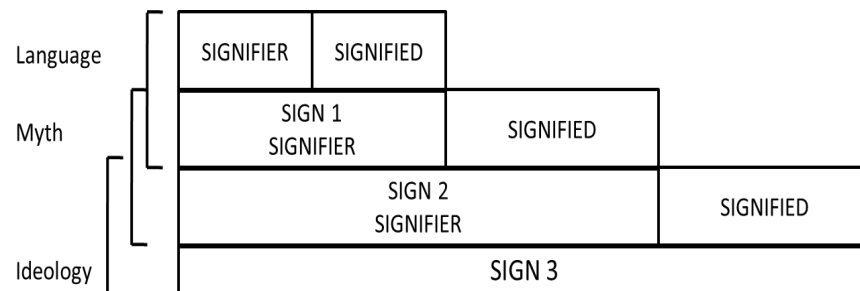


Figure 5: Relation Signifier and Signified in Shaping Ideology

For example, in the example studied advertising, Advertising Suzuki Nex create meaning through catchphrase, solidarity. The slogan produces meaning of togetherness, united determination and ideals, spirit or zest for living with motor products. Suzuki Nex advertising message, the spirit of solidarity means living together with Suzuki Nex. The first level refers to the denotation of the sign (language). At the second level of the first signs of the level of a marker of myth, and generate new signified (the new object), the togetherness, united determination and ideals, spirit. In the context of this myth tells us that if we use motorcycle products Suzuki Nex then we will have a spirit, a sense of community (tolerance). At the level of ideology, Suzuki Nex as a motorcycle manufacturer in the sign infiltrates through the marker, which then generates the meaning of ideology, the first is economic interest (profit) for Suzuki, that the consumer with the ability to unite different cultures (ethnicity, age, education, profession) through its slogan, Suzuki basically want to bring together consumers who have the determination to only choose the brand of Suzuki Motor.

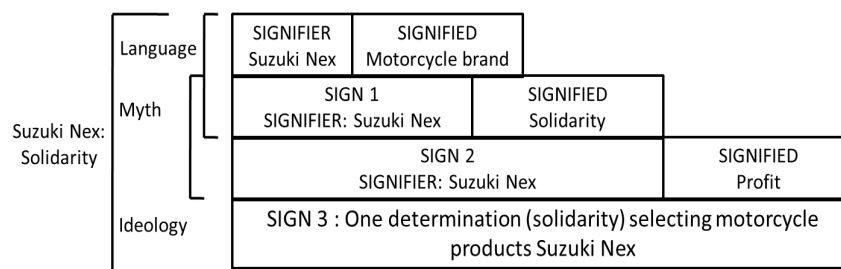


Figure 6: Relation Signifier and Signified in Shaping Ideology of Suzuki Nex

Myth and Ideology Relation

Myth is a form of message or speech to a sign (object) in which these markers become naturalized thing. Myth is a way of giving meaning to an object. So, how myths naturalize a message to be a natural thing. For example, the myth does not only explain the motorcycle brand in plain view as a means of transportation, but also the important thing was said about the way the bike brand product. Anything can be said to be a myth for phrased in the form of speech. For example, the media said about brand advertising that promoted the motor can be made in a variety of versions. Brand motorcycle products that are spoken by the advertising medium not only has the function of material, but a particular brand of product has a broad meaning: the rate of speed of the speed of resolving any associated vehicle activity, identity,

leadership, masculinity, etc.

So, mythical themes raised in the television advertising range from common views in society. At Suzuki Nex ad, the advertiser discusses about the speed, which is represented through the tagline, *You are Nex, the other end*. The myth says that Suzuki Nex is a speedster who can immediately resolve all matters (activities), and provide comfort for the rider as the bike has rapid technological, economical, and stylist advantages.

The ads Suzuki Satria said myths courage to be different and told that the ideals, obsession, life goals, idol, all the hopes and desires of human life, especially young people there on the Suzuki Satria. This ad does no longer tells about the function of the product material, but rather to social one.

Departing from the above description it can be said that the myth is a discussion of speech (parole) which has a function as a medium in telling expressions of the ideology of dominant groups (producers). Which meant the dominant ideology is a set of ideas and practices that maintain and actively promote various dominant values and interests (producers) in the community. However, the dominant ideology is circulated and exchanged is imaginary, a view of an object or idea (reality products) that do not have a reference to the actual reality, but that view is considered a natural thing naturally. Thus, television advertisements motorcycle products not only inform the use value and exchange value, but over pressuring the symbolic value of the sign, which is attached to the meaning of the image of the product: the image of speed, leadership, togetherness, solidarity, identity and differentiation.

Myth as Simulacrum

The word 'simulacrum' comes from the Latin. In French, this word means *image, apparence sensible qui se donne pour une réalité* - picture, delicate appearance that provides for reality (Petit Robert, 1983: 1817). The concept of the simulacrum can be found in the idea of Baudrillard, one of the thinkers who developed the theory of Barthes semiotics. In writing Baudrillard, *Simulacra and simulation*, (1998, 166) explained that: *The simulacrum is never what hides the truth. It is truth that hides the fact that there is none. The simulacrum is truth.*

The objective is to create a new object of myth (new meaning) which is different from the first object (the first level (denotation) as the cornerstone of the establishment of a myth. Referred to the new object is a simulacrum, namely the construction of public views of an object or idea (reality product) in the community who do not have a reference to the actual reality, but these views are considered a natural thing.

Television advertising is a myth which is only the simulacrum in the media, living in a world of imagination (virtual) but the meaning of myth in television advertising into real estate or live in the minds of viewers, as well as life in the midst of the community as a form of public knowledge: general awareness or general views.

As a form of public knowledge, position of the television commercials advertising has the meaning of myth as the value of people's lives. When a television advertisement touches a set of values, for example the motorcycle community, the public views the advertisement is constructed to be a part of community awareness or general view of the motor. When this system can produce television ads for the meaning of a social life (motorcycle community), and conversely, individuals and communities, for example the motorcycle community, it reproduces advertisements as the meaning of the existence of a society. Myth as a construction of simulacrum in television ads, signs realized, is seen as a natural reality or even the meaning of reality that contain ambivalence.

Suzuki Satria ad tells the story of how one could look different by using a Suzuki Satria. The features that distinguish the motorcycle owned by other brands, including a 150 CC engine technology, a unique and sporty models. Then, the function of the material is transferred into the value of the sign or the symbolic meaning: different styles, different purpose, different obsessions and different idol. This myth creates human meanings to Suzuki Satria motorcycle riders.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research and analysis of data, it can be concluded :

First, the production of the sign (meaning). Advertising constructs meaning in myth and ideology to promote product in a way we create something meaningful. Advertising as a sign to sell something else (socio-cultural function) in addition to commercial objects (use value). Something that has social and cultural values that exist in the community who then transferred the meaning of socio-cultural values into the product. The social significance of culture as a representation of the myth and ideology in television advertising is the creation of self-identity, differentiation, and exchange of symbolic signs. In order for the above product are communicated message means something to us, the ads create meaning for ourselves an identity, differentiation and value exchange through the use of the product. Meaningfulness of the human person is obtained by using the commercial production.

Second, the circulation of signs: the circulation of signs (messages) in television advertising, advertising interpellate individuals into meaningful subject. Advertising involves the viewer as the subject of the meaning of the messages in television commercials. Advertising sells us ourselves to capitalize on our strengths: the hope, the desire to be better, self-actualization.

Third, the exchange of the sign. Ads forms what is called the simulacrum as a representation on the myth or the common views in the community (community bike). Simulacrum is common views known only in the medium of television, viewers then encodes the messages that television advertising as a sign of reality. Creation of myths as simulacrum is the use of simulation models, which take socio-cultural code in public as a sign that refers to something else that is transferred into the product meaning. Through the simulation model (exchange system marks) individual (motorcycle community) trapped in a world of imagination on which he realized the truth despite the apparent real ambivalence. Advertising as a sign of ignorance of reality creates a product that has established structures of meaning in human beings.

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